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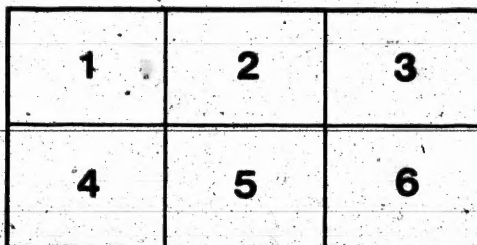
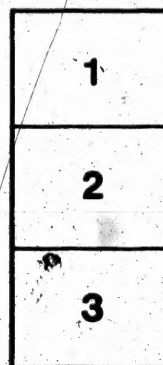
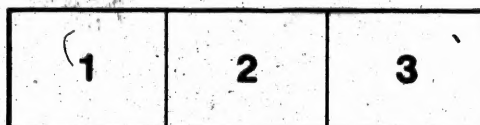
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A PLAIN AND SHORT
CATECHISM ON CONFIRMATION;

WITH
TWO PRAYERS:

ONE TO BE USED BEFORE, AND THE OTHER AFTER THAT
SERVICE.

BY THE REV. J. BICKERSTETH, M.A.,
VICAR OF ACTON, SUFFOLK.

==

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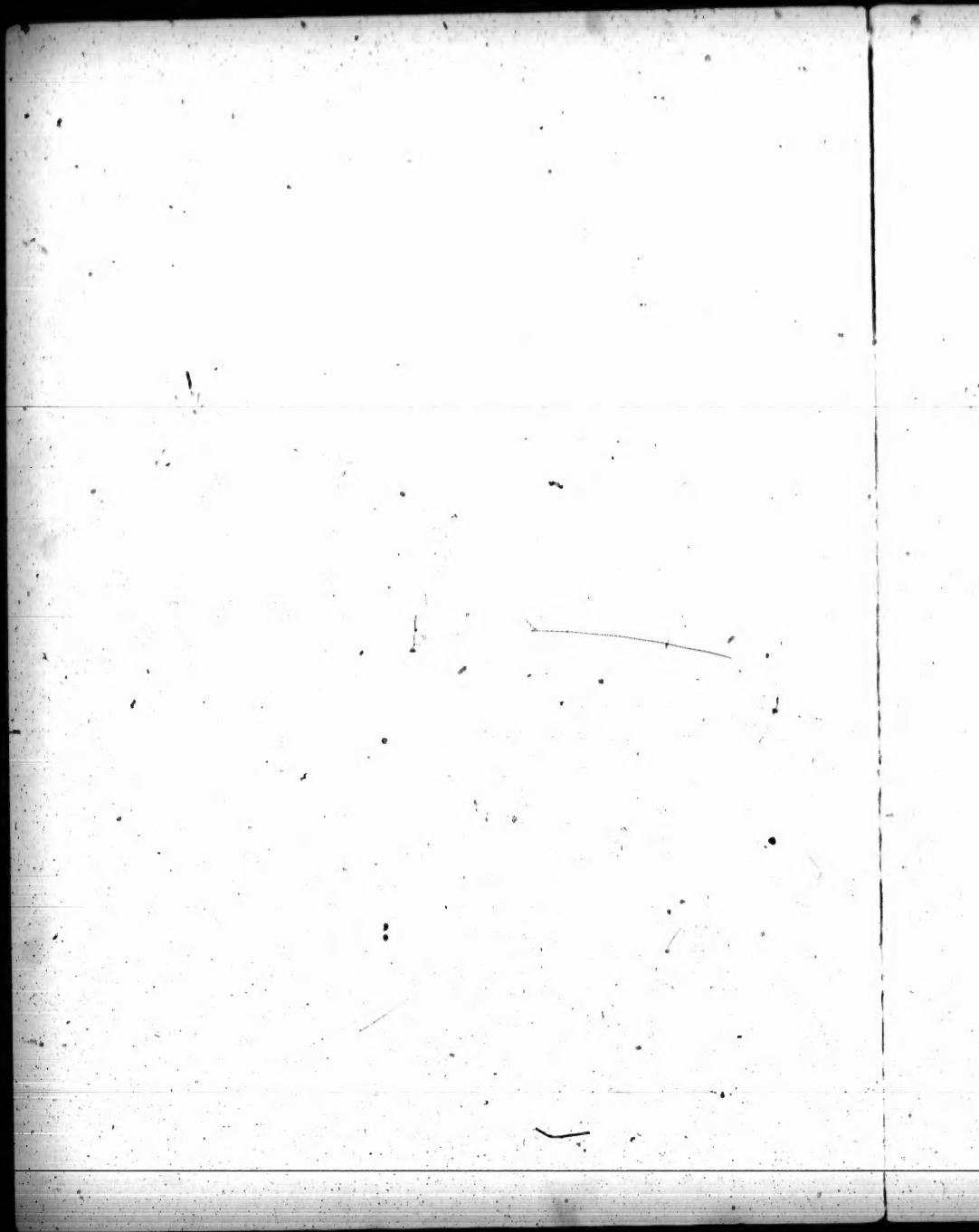
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A PLAIN AND SHORT
CATECHISM ON CONFIRMATION.

1. What do you mean by the word confirming?

Strengthening or establishing.

2. Why is the service of confirmation so called?

Because in it we confirm or establish the promise and vow made for us in baptism.

3. Can you give another reason?

Because in that service the Bishop, by prayer and laying on of his hands, seeks to confirm and establish us in the resolution so to do; and chiefly, because the grace of God the Holy Ghost is therein sought for and relied upon by the faithful for the effectual confirmation of the whole.

4. What, then, is the special duty of those who are confirmed?

Openly before the Church to take upon themselves the promise and vow made for them in their baptism.

5. To what should confirmation be considered as the step?

To the Lord's table.

6. Who ought to be confirmed?

Those who, having been baptized in their infancy, are now come to years of discretion.

7. What is the best qualification for those who desire to be confirmed?

A sincere intention to yield themselves to, and serve the Lord.

8. What was promised for you, first, in your baptism?

That I should renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanity of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh.

9. Who is the devil?

Satan, the chief of the wicked fallen angels.

10. What are the works of the devil?

Blasphemy, pride, witchcraft; envy, hatred, malice; hypocrisy, lying, slandering; despair, presumption, unbelief; delighting in wickedness, and tempting others to sin.

11. What is meant by the world?

The things of the world, and the men of the world.

12. What is meant by the world's pomps?

Its honour, show, and wealth; by the desire and love of which, pride is nourished, and the heart withdrawn from God.

13. What are the world's vanities?

Amusement, company, dress, pleasure; which worldly persons love and pursue, to the hurt of their souls.

14. What is meant by the flesh?

Our corrupt fallen nature.

15. What are its lusts?

Its forbidden desires.

16. What then, when confirmed, do you promise and vow for yourself?

That, by God's grace, I will renounce the devil, the world, and the flesh?

17. Why should they be renounced?

Because they are the enemies of my soul, and hinderers of my salvation.

18. What was promised for you secondly in your baptism?

That I should believe all the articles of the Christian faith?

19. Where are these to be found?

In the holy scriptures.

20. Where are they chiefly summed up?

In the Apostles' creed.

21. Who is the object of our Christian faith and worship?

The same divine Being in whose name we were baptized; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, three persons and one ever blessed God.

22. What have you to add particularly of each person in the Trinity?

God the Father made me and all the world; God the Son redeemed me and all mankind; God the Holy Ghost sanctifies me, and all the elect people of God.

23. What else does the Christian faith require you to believe?

That I was born in sin, a child of wrath; and, till I am changed and converted, cannot please God.

24. What further?

That the soul is more precious than the body, and this life short compared with the next,

25. What further?

That after death is the judgment, and then joy, or sorrow without end.

26. What further?

That Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the only Saviour; and that those who are saved by him, come to him for salvation.

27. How must they come?

By the prayer of faith.

28. Give a specimen.

O Lord God! grant that thy Holy Spirit may impart to me a true sense of my guilt and misery, and draw me in faith, hope, and love, to Jesus Christ, thy Son, for salvation.

29. What then upon this head do you promise for yourself in confirmation?

That, by God's grace, I will adhere to and maintain all the articles of the Christian faith.

30. What was promised in your name and for you, thirdly, in your baptism?

That I should keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of my life.

31. To what does this promise bind you?

To serve God in sincerity and truth as long as I live.

32. How may you be enabled to do this?

Only by the grace of God.

33. What do you mean by the grace of God?

The assistance of the Holy Spirit.

34. How may this be had ?

God will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him. Luke xi. 13.

35. How will it appear that you are in earnest to take upon yourself the baptismal vow ?

By my careful and serious preparation, first, for the confirmation, and secondly, for the Lord's supper.

36. Who are likely to be the best prepared for both ?

Those that most deeply feel their need of, and most earnestly pray for, the Holy Spirit.

37. After the preface, into how many parts may the service for confirmation in the Prayer Book be divided ?

Four.

38. What is the first ?

The Bishop's question, and the answer required from those who come to be confirmed.

39. Repeat the question.

Do you here, in the presence of God, and of this congregation, renew the solemn promise and vow that was made in your name at your baptism ; ratifying and confirming the same in your own

persons, and acknowledging yourselves bound to believe, and to do, all those things which your Godfathers and Godmothers then undertook for you?

40. What is the required answer?

I do.

41. What is implied in this answer?

I do—renounce the devil, the world, and the flesh: I do—accept and take Jesus Christ for my Lord, and Master, and only Saviour: I do—resolve henceforth to walk in his ways, and keep his commandments with my whole heart; relying upon his promised help to confirm and strengthen me in this resolution.

42. What is the second part in the service of confirmation?

It consists of prayer for the increase of spiritual grace in behalf of those who are to be confirmed.

43. What is the third part?

The confirmation itself; or the Bishop's laying on of hands on the heads of those confirmed, with prayer for the Divine blessing.

44. Show me how the Bishop's prayer may be used in private as a prayer before confirmation.

Defend me, O Lord, with thy heavenly grace; that I may continue thine for ever, and daily increase in thy Holy Spirit, more and more, until I come unto thy everlasting Kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—Amen.

45. What is the fourth or last part of this service?

It consists of the Lord's prayer, and two concluding collects, (one specially for those confirmed, the other for all present,) and the blessing.

46. What may you expect in the due course of confirmation?

To be confirmed and established in the faith, hope, love, and obedience of the gospel.

47. What say you of those who offer themselves for confirmation, without care, forethought, or serious preparation?

They are deceivers; drawing upon themselves a curse, rather than a blessing.

48. What, in confirmation duly observed, do you acknowledge?

My baptism, and all its engagements.

49. What besides do you acknowledge?

The church, which acknowledged and received me when I was an infant.

50. How will it appear that in confirmation you have received a blessing?

By my remembrance of, and conscientious regard to, the promise and vow I then make for myself.

51. By what will this be certainly followed?

An anxiety and determination, without delay, to partake of the Lord's supper.



PRAYER BEFORE CONFIRMATION.

O LORD GOD! I am a sinful creature, born in sin, and by nature a child of wrath: I have sinned against thee daily: God be merciful to me a sinner! For thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, create in me a new and contrite heart. I thank thee, O Lord, that by thy goodness I was early given to thee in my baptism, and engaged to forsake and renounce all sin and wickedness, and to cleave to and follow that only which is good:—Pardon—O pardon me, who have so often gone contrary to this my bounden duty; and now that I am called to take upon myself the promise and vow made

for me when I was baptized, I thank thee for the real desire, which I trust thou hast given me, to do this in the solemn service of confirmation. O Lord, help me to be careful and earnest, sincere and serious in what I am about to do : Make me willing to yield myself *indeed* to thee ; to renounce a vain and wicked world ; to believe in, follow, love, and serve Jesus Christ ; continually to mortify my evil and corrupt affections ; and daily to proceed in all virtue and godliness of living : and so convince me of my helplessness, as well as sinfulness, that I may not cease anxiously to pray for the promised help of thy Holy Spirit. O that my heart may be softened and changed, and turned from sin to thyself ; make me, O Lord, a new creature, that from henceforth I may in earnest care for my soul, and provide for eternity. Keep me from following the example of those who are careless ; and from the vanity heedlessness, dangers, snares, and temptations of youth. Never suffer me to draw back, but by thy grace fix and establish my heart for ever ; and after confirmation, O let thy light and thy

truth lead and bring me to thy holy table, there to eat of that bread, and drink of that cup, which thou hast provided for the further strengthening and refreshing of my soul. Bless all those who may be confirmed with me; assist all of us in our preparation for, and approach to, this service; and as we grow in years may we grow in grace. O Lord, grant this, and all we need, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

PRAYER AFTER CONFIRMATION.

O MOST merciful Lord, and heavenly Father, I bless and praise thee, who hast permitted me, worthless as I am, to renew and take upon myself, in thy presence, the vow and promise made for me in my baptism. Forgive the wanderings of my thoughts and the coldness of my devotion, during the solemn service in which I have been engaged; and for my Saviour's sake withhold not thy blessing. O Lord, I am thy servant: grant that I may continue thine for ever. Pity the feeble-

ness, the folly, and inexperience of my youth ; save me from sin, vanity, and the world ; strengthen me with the Holy Ghost the Comforter ; and daily increase in me the manifold gifts of grace ; the spirit of wisdom and understanding ; of knowledge and true godliness. Fill me, O Lord, with thy holy fear. Let thy fatherly hand, I beseech thee, ever be over me, to lead and uphold me in thy ways, that in the end I may obtain everlasting life. Dispose and enable me, O heavenly Father, by thy grace, to make a fresh surrender of myself to thee in the sacrament of the Lord's supper ; that I may there confess Christ before men, and show in the face of the Church that I have not been confirmed in vain. O Lord, by thy grace prepare me for every duty ; by thy power preserve me from every sin, that I may repent, believe, and live always as becomes the Gospel, to thy praise and glory, through Jesus our Lord. Amen.

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